



*News Release from Congressman*

# **ROB SIMMONS**

SECOND DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **HOUSE PASSES SIMMONS' LONG ISLAND SOUND PROTECTION BILL**

*Major Environmental Protection Legislation Slated For Senate Passage, Signed Into Law*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Rep. Rob Simmons, R-2nd District, today announced that the House of Representatives late last night passed H.R. 5160, the “Long Island Sound Stewardship Act (LISSA).” The act, introduced in 2004 by Reps. Simmons and Steve Israel (D-NY), would provide \$25 million to identify and protect land along the Long Island Sound.

“As the Co-chair of the Congressional Long Island Sound Caucus, I am pleased that the LISSA legislation is finally on track to become law,” Simmons said. “The measure is a result of a bipartisan, bi-state and bicameral effort to protect and preserve one of our greatest environmental treasures – the Long Island Sound.”

The Simmons’ LISSA legislation would create an advisory committee to be chaired by the director of the Long Island Sound office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The rest of the committee would be comprised of Connecticut and New York representatives from Federal, State, and local government interests, as well as non-government organizations, academic, private and development interests.

The committee would identify for preservation lands along the Sound and make recommendations to the EPA. The EPA would then go about administering grants for the sake of acquiring properties or development rights. The bill was carefully crafted so that the process would not impinge on the rights of property owners.

The Simmons-Israel measure has the support of members of Congress on both sides of the aisle from Connecticut and New York, as well as a number of environmental advocacy groups, such as the Audubon of CT and NY, the CT Department of Environmental Protection, and the NY Department of Environmental Conservation.

“Today is an historic day for the future of the Long Island Sound, thanks to the leadership and steadfast support of Congressman Rob Simmons and his New York colleague Congressman Steve Israel, for the restoration and stewardship of this nationally significant estuary,” said Tom Baptist, Executive Director for Audubon Connecticut. “The Stewardship Act will protect and enhance the critical areas around the Sound where the land meets the sea. Today’s bipartisan victory will provide the necessary funds to protect important open space and ecologically significant sites, while we continue our battle to restore the water quality of the Sound itself.”

Simmons concluded, “In Connecticut, we know that the Sound is a dynamic place, and the more we do to protect it from adverse human activities, the better off we are. The U.S. Congress now shares our goal of preserving and protecting the Long Island Sound.”

Simmons is working with Sen. Joe Lieberman to ensure quick Senate passage before the expected congressional adjournment on Saturday.

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